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ABSTRACT

The need for civic education is an important and urgent issue throughout the world, particularly in the Chechen Republic, which is undergoing transition from a war culture to a peace culture. The European Commission, together with the Council of Europe and other entities, held a training seminar on civics teaching for teachers and school administrators (n=20) from the Chechen Republic in Ghelendjik in October 2001. The seminar had the following objectives: (1) to discuss the teaching resource presented in the handbook "Civic Education," prepared by Russian specialists; (2) to discuss the introduction of civic education in the Chechen schools; (3) to examine ways to manage schools democratically and create a democratic school life; (4) to determine how to support civic education in Chechen schools; and (5) to acquaint teachers with the methodological foundations of civic education, its concept and working methods, as well as to provide guidelines for introducing civic education in schools. This report consists of: "Introduction"; (1) "First Day: Council of Europe Project 'Education for Democratic Citizenship'"; (2) "Second Day: Civic Education Concept and Contents"; (3) "Third Day: Peace Culture, Human Rights, and Democratic Rights as a Basis of Civic Education"; (4) "Fourth Day: New Teaching Methods"; (5) "Fifth Day: Work in Groups I. Teacher's Pedagogical Competency and Conflict Resolution, II. The School as a Legal Space"; and (6) "Sixth Day: Work in Groups I. School Climate, II. Ability to Conduct Negotiations as a Tool for Conflict Resolution in Schools." (BT)

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**European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights**
**Joint Programme of Co-operation to Strengthen Democratic Stability in North Caucasus**

# Seminar on "The methodology of civics teaching" for teachers from the Chechen Republic, Ghelendjik, Russian Federation, 1-6 October 2001

**Seminar organised jointly by the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Ministry of Public Education of the Russian Federation, the Academy for Retraining of Educators and Upgrading Professional Standards and the Centre of Civic Education**

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## Introduction

The European Commission together with the Council of Europe, the Ministry of Public Education of the Russian Federation and the Centre of Civic Education held a training seminar for teachers from the Chechen Republic in the health resort or Krasnaya Talka, located in the town of Ghelendjik (Krasnodar region) from 1 to 6 October, 2001. The seminar was entitled "The methodology of civics teaching".

The following persons were on the board of the seminar organising committee: Ms Angela Garabagiu - Council of Europe; Ms T.V. Bolotina - Director of the Centre of Civic Education, chair of the organising committee and in charge of the seminar; Mr V.A. Mijerikov - head of the Department on Restoration of Education in the Chechen Republic, Ministry of Public Education of the Russian Federation.

The participants were school administrators and teachers from seven areas of the Chechen Republic - in total around of 20 persons took part in the seminar.

The themes were methodological approaches to civic education and how to make schools more democratic. The seminar methods were open discussion, training, plenary sessions and group work. This short seminar report could be useful when preparing teacher trainers on civic education.

**Seminar objectives**

The need for civic education is an important and urgent issue throughout the world, including in the Russian Federation, but this is especially true for the Chechen Republic, which is undergoing transition from a war culture to a peace culture. The organising committee plans to hold a second seminar as follow-up to the present one (2 seminars were held in the autumn and spring of last year for a first group), with the same group of Chechen school administrators and teachers on the topic of civic education, as well as a conference, based on the results of two teacher training seminars, bringing both groups together.

The seminar had the following objectives:

- to discuss the teaching resources presented in the handbook *Civic education*, prepared by Russian specialists, in the framework of the Council of Europe project on preparing teachers for civic education;

- to discuss the introduction of civic education in the Chechen schools;

- to examine ways to manage schools democratically and create a democratic school life;

- to determine how to support civic education in Chechen schools.

The main aim of this seminar was to acquaint teachers with the methodological foundations of civic education, its concept and working methods, and to provide guidelines for introducing civic education in schools.

The seminar work was carried out by the following education specialists:

Mr I. Froumin, the former director of the school "Univers" in Krasnoyarsk, expert on education at the World Bank, Moscow office;

Mr A.M. Gerasimov, professor at the Sub-Faculty of the Social and Political Education and Law of the Academy for Retraining of Educators and Upgrading Professional Standards;

Mr A.N. Tubelsky, the director of school "Samoopredelenie (Self - Determination)", Moscow;

Mr A.N. Ioffe, head of the Department of Civic Education Methodology at the Centre of Civic Education;

Ms O.V. Kishenkova, assistant professor at the Sub-Faculty of Social and Political Education and Law of the Academy for Retraining of Educators and Upgrading Professional Standards.

Ms. T. V. Bolotina, Director of Centre of Civic Education, Moscow.

**1. First day: Council of Europe project "Teaching democracy in civil society"**

Ms Angela Garabagiu from the Council of Europe opened the seminar by welcoming the participants, and presenting the Council's work on the recovery of the education system in Chechnya, highlighting the teacher-training programme for Chechen teachers in civic education.

In their reports Mr Froumin, Mr Mijerikov and Ms Bolotina focused on the problems of the educational policy of the Ministry of Public Education of the Chechen Republic.

Mr Gerasimov initiated an exercise designed to break down any psychological barriers the participants might have had and to encourage co-operation and dialogue. The participants (the Chechen teachers and Moscow experts) had to give a short presentation of themselves (name, where they were from, a description of their personality) and tell what they expected to get out of the seminar. Mr Gerasimov wrote their answers on the blackboard. A discussion followed.

The teachers expressed concern over the themes of peace culture, violation of human rights, democratic environment in

schools, ability to conduct negotiations and solving conflicts peacefully. This was taken into consideration by the seminar.

**Presentation of seminar programme, T. Bolotina**

It was explained that the seminar would last 144 hours. The seminar would be spread out over two sessions. After this first session, a second would be held in spring 2002. The seminar programme prepared by the teachers corresponded to the participants' idea of what the seminar should focus on. On completion of this session, the participants would receive essays topics to be prepared at home. The second session would begin with a discussion of these essays. Upon completion of the second session, which would be held in March or April 2002, all teachers would receive Academy[1] certificates testifying that they had completed the seminar training and were entitled to teach civic education.

**Presentation of the Council of Europe project "Education for Democratic Citizenship", by A. Garabagiu**

**Summary**: The project "Education for Democratic Citizenship" was initiated in 1997 and aimed to identify the values and skills necessary for individuals to become active citizens. The project was divided into subgroups. The first subgroup drew up the concepts and aims of the project by elaborating a conceptual framework for education for democratic citizenship, including the appropriate terminology to identify the basic skills necessary for democratic actions.

The second subgroup worked on sites of citizenship. The purpose was to determine, draw on the experience, compare and maintain the development of the sites of citizenship.

The third subgroup worked on the systems of teaching and teaching resources. Their aim was to determine various methods and ways of teaching. There are four final reports presenting the results of the project. Civic education methodology was elaborated in the Russian Federation during the course of the project. The compendium of recommendations on methodology, *the Handbook of Civic Education*, edited by Mr Froumin and Ms Voskresenskaya, had been prepared on the basis of the results of the this work.

**Civic education methodology - presentation of the handbook *Civic education*, Mr Froumin**

**Summary**: The strategic aim of social development in Russia is shaping civic society and building a state based on the rule of law. The functioning of a democratic society depends on competent and educated citizens. Studying of European and Russian experiences of civic education has shown that many problems of civic education have been solved not only through the educational disciplines, but also by developing pupils' self-determination. This is essentially a process of effectively learning how democracy functions: by educating children to take initiatives and choose for themselves; and by setting up co-operation structures between the teachers, children and parents. When teaching citizenship, it is impossible to take on the role of a lecturer - citizenship education requires other methods and forms of work, such as interactive methods.

**Summary of the first day of training.** Education for democratic citizenship in a democratic society in a state based on the rule of law is of great importance, particularly so for the Chechen Republic. Introducing civic education into Chechen educational policy will be, however, a difficult a task. Social and economic factors are not yet favourable and its society is not yet stable. But it is mandatory to start the process!

## 2. Second day: civic education - concept and contents

**General review of the state of civic education in the Russian Federation, Ms Bolotina.**

**Summary**: In the Russian Federation there are several classifications and models for civic education. One has been prepared by our centre. This classification distinguishes between six approaches to civic education.

The first approach is based upon situation modelling. Its set of topics includes those, which make up the course content of political, economic, social and legal science. Pupils discuss concrete situations and solve problems according to concrete examples. A practical application of this model can be found in the programmes and textbooks published by the Centre "Citizen", under the supervision of Y.A. Sokolov and teachers

from Bryansk, who are implementing the programme "Civic forum".

The second approach is a subject approach, based upon law and political science. It emphasises that civic education must be an independent discipline. The foundations of political and legal science are studied within this approach. The following authors use it: N. Voskresenskaya, V. Mushinskiy, A. Nikitin, as well as the projects "Vivid Law" (St. Petersburg) and "Fund of legal reforms".

The third approach is an integrated one in that its advocates consider that civic education corresponds to social science education and it shall be part of an integrated course on social science. This approach is supported by such authors as A. Bololyubov, O. Kishenkova and others.

The fourth approach to civic education is an institutional one and it is focused on the democratisation of school life, creation of a legal space in schools, and transformation of schools into centres of social and cultural relations and setting-up partnerships with cultural and educational bodies and businesses. Advocates of this type of approach are the schools "Samoopredelenie (Self-Determination)" (school head A. Tubelskiy, Moscow) and "Universe" (school head V. Bashev, Krasnoyarsk).

The fifth approach to civic education is based upon the organisation of project activities. With a view of helping pupils assume their responsibilities in society more effectively, schools often use a project form of civic education, thus implementing various projects at both international and local level, relevant to civic education. Examples of this are the projects "New civilisations" (ЮКОС (YUKOS)) and "Citizen", being implemented in the town of Samara, among others.

The sixth approach is called "the domino model". Schools devise their own approach to civic education by studying different scenarios, case studies and examples of how other schools have approached civic education. Taking into account the specificities of their own school, such as the surrounding environment, etc. they put together an approach tailored to their own specific needs. Texts on different school cultures serve as a basis for this approach and examples of these have been drawn up by the Interregional Association of Teachers for Civic Education.

Amongst these are courses for upper-secondary schools on "Choice in a democratic society" and "My choice". The course material may also be used for courses on civil rights. Human rights teaching resources prepared by the Youth Centre on Human Rights (V. Luchovitskiy) are also examples that can be used.

The selection of this or that approach to civic education in different areas is determined by the specific features of the region, as well as by the traditions of their educational institutes, and if the approach is to work, school staff should adapt it to local conditions.

**Main thrusts in the new Concept of Social Studies: "Social science in the modernisation of general education", O. Kishenkova.**

**Summary**: The particular features of the new Concept of Social Studies may be summarised as follows:

- the concept of social studies includes references to the conceptual basis for civic education;

- the aims have been established according to levels of education - primary, secondary and higher education, with separate aims for profession and vocational schools, which is supposed to be at secondary school level. If the old documents were drawn up on the basis of the teacher's aims, the new one takes into account pupils' aims, which means that pupils now have a choice of certain subjects;

- the planned changes will reduce the burden of an overloaded curricula in the secondary school. The courses will be restructured and regrouped. Some courses will be transferred from secondary to professional/vocational schools;

- the curricula has several parts, referred to as "components": federal (obligatory for the entire federation), regional, and local. The new curriculum includes also the pupils' component. The possibility for pupils to have a say in selecting certain courses they are interested in was introduced by the newly developed concept of civic education. A part of teachers' time will be devoted to working with pupils individually on their projects.

- the new concept document contains an indication to various approaches to curriculum development. The curriculum is structured to reflect the following school steps: primary, secondary and higher education.

- the content of social studies was reconsidered to reflect the volume of studies, which can be learned by the pupil at each particular grade. This means that the learning objectives are based on the student's capacity to learn, and not on the teacher's capacity to teach, as it was before. The authors took into consideration pupils' abilities to cope with the content and ways for doing it, as well as the skills and activity methods (educational, creative, research), which help him/her learn;

- last, an implementation plan was considered for introducing this new concept of social studies.

**Debate: discussion of main documents on standards for "Social science", O. Kishenkova and I. Froumin**

**Conclusions:** The documents drafted under the coordination of L. Bogolyubov contain important new elements, but at the same time they have some disadvantages. The authors were unable to overcome the scientific and centrist approach. As usual, the aims have been formulated using a knowledge-based approach, thus specific activities and the development of abilities and skills are lacking.

The influence of psychologists and specific approaches towards both teaching methods and content selection at different steps are not reflected enough in the aims and contents. It is strange that the social problems and processes of modern society are highlighted as being important in the programme documents, and yet have only a minor place in the actual teaching process.

The documents are open for discussion and revision.

**Role play "Main concepts of civic education", A. Ioffe (for the methodology, see appendix[2])**

**The purpose**: to present the main ideas to be used as a basis for civic education and to present new forms of activities to be used in class.

**Conclusion:** Role play can be incorporated as a training tool into the main areas of civic education, including teaching about legal aspects, peace culture, human rights, democracy, tolerance, the-democratic school climate and co-operation.

**Discussion about the *Handbook of Civic education*, T. Bolotina.**

The discussion was based on the following questions and issues:

- How do you assess the contents and structure of the handbook?

- How do you assess the material from a methodological point of view?

- Do you think the handbook is practical enough?

- Should this handbook be amended to include more aspects or should some materials be taken out?

- Assessment of the textbook as a whole.

**Conclusion:** The textbook is up-to-date and useful and it reflects all aspects of civic education. But at the same time it presents some disadvantages; for example the first chapter on "Foundations of civic education" is difficult to understand, especially section 1 on "Political foundations of civic education", and section 2 on "Socialisation and civic education". Difficult as well are the sections on "Creation of democratic climate and conditions fostering civic education", and "The role of school climate in education. The "hidden" curriculum". One has the impression that these sections were prepared by people who work at research institutes, and not in schools.

If this is a textbook on methodologies, it should contain recommendations on them as well as activities based on experience. And at the same time it should be an interactive textbook. There was no further criticism of the textbook.

The material on democratic school life and conflict resolution methodology was well presented. Overall, the handbook can be used in teaching civic education.

## 3. Third day: Peace culture, human rights and democracy as foundations of civic education

### Introduction to "Peace culture, human rights and democracy as foundations of civic education", T. Bolotina

**Summary:** A more thorough knowledge of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms is one of the key factors in modernising education content.

Teaching human rights encourages forming a value system, the acquisition of the knowledge and skills necessary to lead an independent life in society, an understanding of self-respect and respect for others, tolerance, non-violent conflict resolution, a sense of solidarity and co-operation. From this point of view, human rights are the most fundamental element of a humanist education.

Teaching human rights involves the following aspects of general education: philosophical and cultural, legal, psychological development, upbringing and learning what is right and wrong.

### Introduction to "The democratic debate", A. Ioffe

In a democracy, direct and open elections are carried out. At present, it is urgent that citizens take an active role in democratic elections, especially in Chechnya. It is part of a teacher's job to help pupils understand how the electoral system works and encourage them to take part in this process. This requires teachers who are interested in this subject and special training on how to go about this.

School lessons on this subject will help today's pupils make responsible choices in future, and will encourage them to discuss political issues with their parents and other adults to have a better understanding of the present situation.

The working group topics were: Group 1 - "Human rights", Ms Bolotina; Group 2 - "Elections in democratic society", Mr Ioffe (for a copy of the text, see the appendix). After lunch the working group sessions were resumed and the moderators changed groups.

**Conclusion:** Studying citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms in a democracy is one of the main tasks of the modern school. Exploring these concepts is multifunctional and has humanistic value, since it teaches respect of others, charity, kindness and non-violence.

**4. Fourth day: "New teaching methods"**

**Lecture on "Co-operation as a learning objective and as a teaching method", A. Ioffe.**

**Summary:** Solving many of today's social problems requires joint solutions based on co-operation. And developing co-operation skills is part of civic education. This co-operation takes two forms: teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil. A role-play could be used to form co-operation groups. Special exercises can be designed to master roles, to develop communication skills and the ability to work in a group, acting out specifically assigned roles, and to develop the ability to consult with pupils working in different groups. These forms of work may be used together or separately depending on the specific conditions in which the lesson takes place.

**Practical work**: Group 1. Role-play "Political parties: variety", O. Kishenkova, A. Ioffe; Group 2. "Tolerance: what is it?", T. Bolotina, A. Gerasimov. The aims of these groups were to consolidate the theory and enable participants to test different forms of co-operation.

**Conclusion**: Training the young in civic education requires special methodologies for classroom and out-of-school activities; setting-up situations where the truth can be arrived at only through examining multiple viewpoints, comparing personal social experience with social values using a critical approach to reality. Both knowledge and skills are required to enable citizens to form moral principles and relations with other people and the state. The success of this depends on using active and interactive methods of teaching, such as dialogue, research, problem solving, and other forms of work, based on co-operation.

**5. Fifth day: Work in groups. I. Teachers' pedagogical competency and conflict resolution. II. The school as a legal space**

**Introduction to "Teachers' pedagogical competency and conflict resolution", A. Gerasimov**

**Summary:** A teacher's pedagogical competency is her or his degree of development as an educator. The pedagogical competency is build based on the teacher's personal dedication and pedagogical skills. This is also related to the teacher's personal qualities. A pedagogical culture is determined by pedagogical orientation, intellectual development, organising skills, quality of teaching, desire to improve, and communication.

Conflict resolution is a new branch of education science. Conflict is a reaction to certain interactive situations, and is characterised by opposition and negative feelings. The competence of a teacher to find solutions to conflict situations implies knowing the suitable strategies and being able to apply them in real life situations. Both the school and the teacher should cultivate an environment in which non-violent solutions to conflicts are natural.

**Introduction to "School as a legal space", A. Tubelskiy**

**Summary:** The school shall be considered as a legal space, or a space in which the rights and responsibilities of all those present and related to the school are determined by the rules, agreed upon in common. It shall also be a space where conditions conducive to on-going improvement in democratic behaviour and respect for rules have been created. This is not always an easy environment to create as teachers do not have a solid experience of democratic behaviour and they do not consider democracy and rules as vital values. What does creating a legal space entail? On one hand, continual and varied activities in common, monitoring bodies, standards and regulations, and on the other, courses designed to gain an understanding of democratic behaviour based upon respect for the law.

The practical lessons for the working groups were: Group 1 - "Teacher's pedagogical competency", A. Gerasimov, the purpose of which was to introduce participants to the basics of a pedagogical culture; and Group 2 - "Legal space of a school", A. Tubelskiy, whose purpose was to introduce the basic techniques of creating a democratic environment in schools, which would include building a legal space that is providing a framework of

rules agreed upon in common, adopt the standards of inter-school life and encourage teachers to view this favourably.

**Working groups' conclusions:**

*Group "Teacher's pedagogical competency".* Civics teachers cannot limit themselves to the role of only lecturers who transmit knowledge verbally. It is a priority of civic education that pupils and teachers develop co-operation both during lessons and out-of-school activities. A civics teacher does not perceive pupils as passive listeners but plans active roles for them: researchers, discoverers, organisers, putting their ideas into action. Only those who form mutual relationships with pupils based on the democratic values may be called a teacher.

*Group "School as a legal space".* The legal space of a school is represented as a valid model in democratic society and focuses on the following:

- everyone who teaches and studies at school enjoys the status of a school citizen with equal civic rights;

- open discussion of the democratic values of the school as a collective body;

- both children and adults determine the standards and regulations of school life, and as a result, a school constitution is drawn up;

- the school has competent collective bodies which ensure that jointly accepted standards are carried out; general assemblies, referendums, etc. encouraging the participation of each pupil and teacher in finding solutions to the most important school problems are held;

- everyone may take part in drawing-up or revising standards for collective life at school;

- monitoring bodies in class and other primary collective bodies are available. For example, there is a Court of Honour, which considers pupils' complaints and takes actions to settle disputes in both pupil-pupil and pupil-teacher conflict situations.

**6. Sixth day: Work in groups. I. School climate. II. Ability to conduct negotiations as a tool for conflict resolution in schools.**

**Introduction to "How is the democratic school life developed?", I. Froumin and A. Tubelsky**

**Summary**: The school as an integrated institute determines the definite context, which creates a picture of an ideal of civic education. This picture is formed by many factors and conditions. One of the conditions, determining the success of civic education, is the school climate. Some call it "school life" or "hidden curriculum". That is the environment, in which the relations between the pupils, teachers, administration, parents and community representatives evolve. The school climate is not dealt with within the formal education processes. It is, however, determining pupils' perceptions, including their understanding and practice of democracy. Therefore, school climate shall not be neglected, while speaking about civic education. In fact, it is, following Mr. Tubelskyi, the most powerful factor, which creates a context for learning civic education, and in particular, for acquiring civic participation skills and competencies.

There are two ways of revealing "hidden realities", that is the factors that influence the education process: first of all, by the related sciences, such as philosophy, sociology, etc., and second, by analysing the manifestation of sudden effects of a pedagogical process, which appear unexpectedly. Undesirable and sudden effects of pedagogical work often reflect very serious pedagogical mechanisms. This is why the teacher should reflect not only on the possible outcomes of the formally planned training, but also on his/her actions outside the classroom boundaries.

**Introduction to "The ability to conduct negotiations as a tool for conflict resolution", A. Gerasimov.**

**Summary:** When one speaks about a high level of competence in conflict resolution, one shall suppose a possibility of psycho-technical action in a number of areas (i.e. developing an understanding of causes of a particular conflict, the capacity to negotiate, etc.) taking into account the change of conditions.

**Stages of negotiations**. The first stage involves setting up rules of interaction and reaching agreement to observe these rules. The second stage involves analysing the conflict situation by each party. The third stage involves direct communication on the conflict. The fourth stage involves discussion.

**Practical work:** Group 1 - "Democratisation of school climate" (A. Tubelsky), the purpose of which was to encourage the creation of structures and practical activities to develop civic skills at school. Group 2 - "Ability to conduct negotiations as a tool for conflict resolution" - a role-play called "The flight to the moon" (A. Gerasimov) was performed, which aimed at improving teachers' abilities to effectively analyse and solve conflicts.

**Summing-up** the results of group work (A. Tubelsky and A. Gerasimov).

Conclusions of the group "Ability to conduct negotiations as a tool for conflict resolution": The ability to conduct negotiations, thus reaching agreement under the conditions of collective life and activities is a basic component of the educational process. A teacher should possess this ability. The issue of conflict resolution should be given more attention during the next seminar.

Conclusions of the group "Democratisation of school climate". The participants drew up criteria for a democratic school. They were:

- the choice of training courses is based on interest;

- academically weak pupils should be treated with equal respect;

- teachers should consider their pupils as individuals;

- pupils may have the floor in discussion;

- important decisions are taken after being discussed with pupils;

- teachers and pupils should be aware of children's rights;

- teachers should act the way they expect their pupils to act;

- teachers should consult with pupils on education changes.

**Seminar results:** The seminar programme was completed. Teachers took part in the "Teacher's day" on invitation from the Department of Public Education of Ghelendjik. A constructive dialogue on the specific features of content and methods of civic education in the Chechen Republic was initiated. Democratisation and humanisation of the school microcosm as a way of shaping civic awareness were discussed.

Some of the teachers' comments were: "The seminar topic is important and useful"; "The basic topics are clear, but not everything can be implemented in our republic."; "It was not only interesting but alive; "During the first day of our training I was afraid that I would not be able to memorise everything, to understand it and realize. Now I am sure that I'll be able to do something. I'm eager to try my hand at carrying out role play training and other things". The question, "What material will you use for your work?" was answered as follows: "Conflict resolution as a part of civic education", "Role play and training", "Methodology, debates, role play", "Everything that I received here".

**The participants suggested the following:**
- such seminars are useful but should be more practical and focused;
- conflict resolution and psychology should be emphasised more at the next seminar;
- it would be useful to visit classes in schools;
- more attention should be paid to the situation in Chechnya and the practical lessons should take into account this situation.

**The experts present recommended to:**
- continue the work of the seminar;
- prepare methodological materials on the organisation of lessons taking into account the specific features of people of the Caucasus;
- hold a general conference for Russian and Chechen teachers.

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